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# *Canopy* (film)

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***Canopy*** is a 2013 Australian/Singaporean psychological suspense war film, written and directed by Aaron Wilson and starring Khan Chittenden and Mo Tzu-yi. Set against the backdrop of the Battle of Singapore in World War II, the film is nearly wordless.

| ***Canopy*** | |
|---|---|
| **Directed by** | Aaron Wilson |
| **Produced by** | Katrina Fleming |
| **Written by** | Aaron Wilson |
| **Starring** | Khan Chittenden<br>Tzu-yi Mo |
| **Music by** | Nic Buchanan<br>Rodney Lowe |
| **Cinematography** | Stefan Duscio |
| **Edited by** | Cindy Clarkson |
| **Production companies** | Finer Films<br>Chuan Pictures |
| **Distributed by** | Odin's Eye Entertainment (Australia)<br>monterey media (USA) |
| **Release date** | 10 September 2013 (Toronto International Film Festival)<br>24 April 2014 (Australia)<br>29 August 2014 (United States) |
| **Running time** | 84 minutes |
| **Country** | Australia/Singapore |
| **Languages** | Mandarin, Hokkien, Japanese. English |

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## Plot [ edit source ]

In 1942, war between the Allies and the Japanese rages in the jungles of Singapore. Jim (Khan Chittenden), a Flight Lieutenant in the Royal Australian Air Force, awakens to find himself hanging from a tree by his parachute, shot down in action. Disentangling himself he realises that he has lost his pistol, his only form of defence but manages to salvage his survival gear and sets off into the jungle, narrowly avoiding a Japanese patrol.

Making his way through mud, swamp and a field full of Japanese propaganda leaflets, he eventually runs into Chinese guerrilla fighter Seng (Morning Mo Tzu-Yi) who has also been separated from his unit behind enemy lines. They have another close encounter with a Japanese patrol and elect to set off together to aid each other in reaching friendly territory, despite not being able to speak the other's language.

Early on in their travels Seng is aggrieved to find the body of a comrade he was close to. They are briefly separated when Jim is left to contemplate the scene but he is alerted to Seng's location by the sound of gunfire. Jim is forced to rush to Seng's aid as the guerrilla collapses from a gunshot sustained to the abdomen, the Australian being forced to perform emergency surgery to retrieve the bullet with only bare hands and his sparse survival kit while simultaneously having to keep Seng silent to avoid the attention of the Japanese patrol.

The following night, flashbacks of his 36 hours in the jungle are interrupted as Seng wakes Jim to alert him to another Japanese patrol walking right by them, before the pair are briefly forced to fight off venomous insects from the tree which they had been sleeping under. As they settle back under the tree for the night, Seng shows Jim a photo of his family, causing Jim to drift into a reverie remembering his own wife back home. Jim awakes from his memories to find it is the next morning. He and Seng share a moment together in which they finally learn each other's names before Japanese soldiers find and separate them. As Seng is killed in cold blood by the patrol's officer, troops drag Jim away to a truck and he is driven off to the Japanese base. He watches helplessly out of the back of the truck, knowing that his bid for freedom has finally failed. A time skip then shows Jim back home in Australia, standing in a field of wheat.

## Cast [ edit source ]

- Khan Chittenden as Jim
- Morning Mo Tzu-Yi as Seng
- Robert Menzies
- Edwina Wren as Jim's wife

## Production [ edit source ]

Filming took place over a period of two weeks in Singapore, in and around locations where actual fighting took place during the Japanese invasion of February 1942. These areas included Sungei Buloh wetlands, Bukit Brown Chinese Cemetery and Macritchie Reservoir. Additional filming was carried out in Australia in New South Wales, close to the township of Tocumwal.

Post production of the film was partly financed using crowdfunding through Pozible.[1]

## Awards [ edit source ]

- Grand Prize - Internationales Du Cinema Des Antipodes St Tropez 2014
- Best Director - Festival International de Cinéma en Champagne-Ardenne 2014
- Special Jury Mention - Abu Dhabi International Film Festival 2013

## Reception [ edit source ]

On Rotten Tomatoes, a review aggregator, the film has a score of 74% based on 19 reviews.

## References [ edit source ]

1. ^ Peter Galvin, "Aaron Wilson - Canopy", *SBS Films* 24 Apr 2014 accessed 5 June 2014

## External links [ edit source ]

- *Canopy* at IMDB

Categories: 2013 films | Australian films | Australian war films | World War II films | Pacific War films | Films about shot-down aviators | Films set in Singapore | Films shot in Singapore | Films shot in New South Wales | 2013 psychological thriller films | 2010s survival films | 2010s war films

This page was last edited on 30 October 2020, at 21:18.

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